

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 20, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader McCarthy:

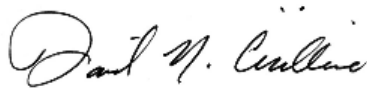
As you continue to develop legislation to respond to the coronavirus and to stimulate our economy, we urge you to strengthen unemployment insurance (UI) in any further coronavirus package. As businesses continue to experience a downturn of commercial activity due to the necessary implementation of social distancing, many workers are facing layoffs or dramatic reduction in hours. For example, CNBC recently reported that unemployment claims increased from 211,000 to 281,000 a week ago, a number that is sure to grow as consumers stay home to decrease the spread of COVID-19.

To respond to this unprecedented crisis, Congress must strengthen unemployment insurance to help affected workers make ends meet while this pandemic continues. Specifically, any future coronavirus response legislation should:

- Increase the current 50 percent federal share to 100 percent;
- Extend unemployment insurance benefits to self-employed individuals; and
- Provide a direct appropriation of federal funds to states to shore up state trust funds.

As states continue to respond to this crisis, they require additional federal support to alleviate pressure on their already strained resources. Strengthening the federal government's share of UI will allow these states to direct resources to the critical infrastructure necessary to respond to this pandemic. We thank you for your commitment to workers in this time of uncertainty and urge you to strengthen UI in order to help affected workers meet their financial obligations as this crisis continues.

Sincerely,



David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

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